



PUBLISHED DAILY AND TRIWEEKLY BY
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ALEXANDRIA, WEDNESDAY, FEB. 7.

The decision of the Electoral Commission upon the question concerning their power to go behind the certificates of election of the presidential electors in the Florida case had not been delivered at 3 o'clock this afternoon, and the doubt respecting it was becoming perplexing and exciting, and the inquirers about it numerous and anxious. The radicals stoutly maintain that as the election of the electors was solely and peculiarly a State affair, and as the certificate of Gov. Stearns was made in accordance with the laws of Florida, neither the Congress of the United States, nor any commission appointed by it, can constitutionally infringe upon the reserved rights of that State to the extent of investigating matters which have already been acted upon by the State authorities. That position might be tenable had it not been for President's Grant's action in sending troops to the State, for if the State had the sole right of correcting the acknowledged fraud of the returning board, but was prevented from doing so by the General Government, through the express orders of its President, that same General Government must do what the people of the State would have done, or else stand convicted as a party to the fraud. If the accomplishment of an outrage in a State can only be prevented by the people of that State rising in their might and hurling the perpetrators from the positions which confer upon them the power to commit the infamy, as the people of Florida were on the eve of doing, and which they certainly would have done had it not been for the orders of President Grant, the authority which compelled them to restrain their hands from taking just vengeance upon their oppressors, should not be used to continue the outrage and make it permanent.

A telegram received since the above was put in type states that the Commission, previously supposed to be unbiased, have, by a strict party vote, determined that because the Florida returning board committed a fraud and Gov. Stearns certified it, the United States government will enforce its operation.

The poor, deluded, negroes are made the scape goats of the radicals on all occasions. Gov. Wells says he feared the two on the board with him might be bought with money; and now Gen. Grant excuses his concentration of troops at the Capitol by saying "when the order was given for troops to come here, there was grave apprehension lest the negro population of the District of Columbia, then represented to be in great destitution, should attempt a raid on the Treasury building and otherwise endanger the peace of the citizens of Washington generally." If the treasury had always been in as little danger of raids by radical thieves as by their simple minded negro dupes it would have a great deal more money in it than it has now.

Foreign News.

The cause of Midhat Pasha's fall dates from some time back. The impetuous character of Midhat Pasha clashed with the firmness of the Sultan, whose liberal views went far ahead of Midhat. The Constitution disappointed the Sultan by the multiplicity of its reserves and qualifications, and many warm discussions occurred between the sovereign and Minister. The Sultan desired to introduce largely a foreign element into Turkish administration, and especially to employ Englishmen in leading positions in all departments. His Majesty expressed this desire to Midhat Pasha very strongly on several occasions, and last week took him sternly to task for not having acted on it. Midhat Pasha replied curtly, and wrote subsequently to the Sultan in undeferential terms. On Friday last the Sultan sent for Midhat Pasha, but the summons was not obeyed. Saturday Midhat Pasha remained at home on a plea of indisposition. On Sunday a third summons was disobeyed, but Midhat Pasha attended a ministerial council in the afternoon. Meanwhile the police discovered secret correspondence, which showed that Midhat Pasha was plotting for the overthrow of the Sultan and his own nomination as Dictator. On Monday a peremptory summons brought Midhat Pasha to the palace, suspecting nothing. On entering he was arrested and his letters laid before him. There was no gain saying evidence against him, and he asked for mercy. A council of Ministers was called, and Midhat Pasha was offered choice of leaving the country or being arraigned before a tribunal on a charge of high treason. He elected to leave the country, and was asked if he would go to Greece. He replied that he did not like the Greeks, and asked to go to Brindisi, but complained that he had no ready money. Twenty-five hundred dollars was given him, and he embarked at noon for Brindisi on board the Imperial yacht Izzedin. The letters found disclosed that three thousand Ulmas were to have gone on Monday night to the palace to demand abdication of the Sultan. The fall of Midhat Pasha will check no reforms, the Sultan being determined to carry out the Constitution in its fullest spirit.

The Porte waives all former claims on Servia of substantial guarantees. Gortschakoff says that the Ottoman empire has been and remains a permanent menace to Europe and humanity.

It is stated that the Russian army has received orders to move forward and will cross the Pruth.

The President of the Chamber of Commerce of Manchester, England, stated at its meeting on Monday that the market for their goods in the United States, which was formerly excellent, had now come to be valueless, and what is worse, considerable trade has sprung up in Manchester in cotton fabrics manufactured in America.

Dr. Monck, a spiritualist, has been sentenced in England to three months' imprisonment.

The small pox is increasing in London.

Secretary Morrill's condition is critical. He suffers from typhoid pneumonia.

Louisiana.

The committee on the powers, privileges and duties of the House in counting the electoral vote, yesterday morning, recalled Gov. Wells. The cross-examination was conducted by Mr. Field, who asked the witness whether just before he left New Orleans he had a discussion with E. J. Barrett, a member of the Packard Legislature, about the action of the returning board, and he replied he had not.

Q. Was anything said by him as to having an interview with Gov. Nichols? A. Yes.

Q. Did you say in the course of your conversation with Mr. Barrett that you had determined to make a statement to Gov. Nichols? A. It is a most infamous lie.

Q. Do you mean to say the question is an infamous lie? A. I say the substance of the question is a lie.

Q. If you would answer my question in the way a witness should answer it would be better. A. I will not ask your advice as to how I shall answer a question.

The Chairman. You must answer in response to the question. This is not a place for personal explanations.

Witness. I can defend myself elsewhere.

Q. Did you state that you had determined to make a statement to Gov. Nichols? A. No, sir.

Q. Did you say anything about the intervention of Mr. J. P. Kennedy? A. I did not, sir.

Mr. Barrett had asked me whether I would have an interview with Gov. Nichols. I replied that I would, as Gov. Nichols was a gentleman. Mr. Barrett made an explanation to the Legislature refuting the false charges against me.

The witness in further response to questions said he also had a conversation with J. P. Kennedy about an interview with Gov. Nichols. Kennedy opened the conversation, and asked him whether he had any objections to an interview with Gov. Nichols, and he replied in language similar to that in his conversation with Barrett. Kennedy suggested the interview with Gov. Nichols about State matters. Both Barrett and Kennedy were his political friends.

Q. Did you not state that you would make a clean breast of it? A. It is a most infamous lie.

Q. Do you mean to say that you never said to anybody you conversed with that you intended to make a clean breast of it? A. I said nothing of the kind.

Q. What was there in State affairs about which you wished to have an interview with Gov. Nichols? A. I do not know what Gov. Nichols desired, therefore I cannot say. Had I remained in New Orleans I would have had the proposed interview with Gov. Nichols.

Mr. Field read a letter dated New Orleans, Jan. 14, 1877, and signed by Gov. Wells, as follows: "I am quite unwell, too much so to fill my engagement to day; will inform you tomorrow relative to its fulfillment."

Witness said he wrote that note, and that Mr. Kennedy was to have been present at the proposed interview with Gov. Nichols.

The witness was asked whether he did not an hour after he wrote the above note send another marked "confidential," as follows:

"Dear Sir—After our friend Barrett had left our room there was placed in my hands matters requiring my absence from New Orleans."

The witness said he expected to be back in a few days, and then related that he had been summoned to Washington.

Mr. Field asked a question requiring explanation of the manner of proceeding to canvass the vote in Louisiana. The witness said that on Saturday he had sent a note to the committee asking to be heard only with reference to Maddox and Vernon parish, and he did not intend to throw away his rights as an American citizen and be forced to answer questions on other subjects. He desired to answer no other questions whatever until the House should remove him from the charge of contempt of its authority. When thus relieved he would feel free to answer.

The chairman reminded the witness that he was subpoenaed to appear here and was expected to tell the whole truth, but he declined now to answer, and if he persisted in doing so the House again placed himself in contempt, and such would be the opinion of the committee and of the public at large.

Mr. Lawrence agreed with Mr. Seelye and the chairman that the witness should answer. Mr. Field asked the witness several questions, among them the following, namely:—In canvassing the vote of Natchitoches were any irregularities discovered? Did the returning board deliberately add 535 votes to five of the Hayes electors which had not been cast for Hayes? Did you not add 574 to the votes cast for Hayes in the parish of Concordia? These questions the witness severally refused to answer.

The witness also declined to answer the question whether 1,500 votes had not been thrown off from the Tilden electors in the parish of Orleans.

Q. Were there any forged affidavits before the returning board? A. I decline to answer.

Q. Did you advise that forged affidavits be prepared? A. I decline to answer.

Q. Did you not direct that forged affidavits be prepared in the Vernon parish case? A. I did not advise the preparation of any forged affidavits whatever.

Other questions were propounded, but with a like unsatisfactory result.

Mr. Field called attention of witness to the note which he addressed to Mr. Maddox on the 20th of November, as follows:—"You fully understand the situation. Cannot you advise with me relative thereto?" Mr. Field asked the witness why he wrote this note to Mr. Maddox, when he replied that it was intended to be shown to the President and other republican friends, and in order that Mr. Maddox might have an entrance to such friends in order to explain the political condition in Louisiana. Mr. Maddox being a public officer and having been to Louisiana for that purpose. The witness had also sent by Mr. Maddox a letter to the President on the same subject, drawing his attention to the fact of the exasperated condition of the people of that State so that he might be prepared to arrest any movement militating against the returning board, and to prevent destruction of papers, etc.

By Mr. Field—You have stated that you never altered a return or destroyed a paper? A. I decline to answer the question. Witness declined to answer any question concerning the action of the board until the house gave him his liberty and relieved him of his disability. He wanted to know whether he was the peer of any member of the committee or a vassal.

Mr. Knott reminded him that the obligation of his oath required witness to answer every question put to him unless such answer would criminate him.

Mr. Wells said there was no question he might answer which would subject him to prosecution, but he reserved his construction as to what were his rights, and the committee had no right to question him when he was in duress.

Q. Did you take part in any conspiracy to give the State to Tilden? A. Are you through? Mr. Field—No. Stenographer read him the question.

The stenographer read it.

Mr. Wells—Is that the finish of your question?

Mr. Tucker—This is trifling.

The Chairman—Oh, Mr. Wells, answer the question or decline to answer.

Mr. Wells—Can I say a word?

The Chairman—Not now.

Witness—I do not know whether I am a vassal or a peer; if a peer I should like to know it; if I am a vassal I am forced as a servant to answer your question.

The Chairman—I wish in the kindest spirit to bring to your attention the attitude you occupy.

The witness—There is no gentleman to whom I would listen with more attention than to yourself. I must consider my duty.

The Chairman—I merely wished to remind you that having sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, you must answer.

The witness—I will freely whenever relieved of the disability imposed by the House, which holds me in duress.

Mr. Lawrence asked the witness whether he declined to answer because he feared he might render himself liable to criminal prosecution. Witness replied he did not.

Mr. Field—Will you explain what position you occupy?

The witness—Am I a vassal or a peer?

The Chairman—That has nothing to do with your position. You are under obligation to answer every question, excepting, of course, such as might tend to criminate you.

Witness—I reserve to myself the construction of my rights, and the committee have no power to force me to answer questions while I am under sentence of the House.

Mr. Field—You rejected 10,000 votes and upwards; were they rejected for any cause other than alleged intimidation?

Witness—I decline to answer.

Q. Did you not know the rejection of ten thousand votes was a part of a conspiracy to give the electoral vote to the party not entitled to it? A. I leave that for yourself to answer.

Q. Did you take part in any such conspiracy? A. Does that conclude your question?

The Chairman—Oh, answer the question or not.

Mr. Tucker—We will take a vote to see if such conduct on the part of the witness should be tolerated in the committee.

The Chairman—The question is whether the committee will require witness to answer.

Mr. Tucker—The sentence of reprobation should be put on the witness for not answering.

The witness—Then I am a vassal?

The Chairman—Keep order, sir.

Mr. Seelye remarked it was unanimously decided this morning, so far as the authority of the committee went, that the witness should answer the questions.

Messrs. Lawrence and Burdett concurred with Prof. Seelye.

Mr. Field to the Chairman—Is it not a case of contempt and misdemeanor under the laws of the District of Columbia for a witness to refuse to answer questions propounded by a committee?

The Chairman—It is.

The witness—You cannot deter me.

The Chairman—You will be accommodated.

The witness—I am willing to be accommodated.

Mr. Field—The witness is contumacious in the highest degree.

Mr. Field then exhibited to witness a statement showing the number of votes rejected in the several parishes, attested by Chas. S. Abell, secretary of the returning board.

Objection was made to the paper.

The question being taken the objection was overruled by a strict party vote. The statement showed that the board rejected 1,763 Kellogg and 10,280 McBoyle electoral votes.

Another paper was exhibited to witness also attested by Mr. Abell showing the supervisors of registration returned 76,717 Kellogg and 80,515 McBoyle electoral votes; also the certificate of the returning board certifying to the election of the Kellogg electors, and that they received 75,135 votes, and that the McBoyle electors received 70,508 votes.

Mr. Lawrence asked witness whether, if the return from Vernon parish, as carried with the tabulated statement, was different from the original returns, it was done with his knowledge or approval?

The witness replied it was not, nor had he knowledge it was done with the approbation of any other member of the board; and he also denied the truth of Littlefield's statement that he directed the returns to be altered so as to elect Hunter and Andrews judge and district attorney. They were his personal, but not political friends.

Mr. Field interrogated witness about the papers of the former had exhibited, but the witness declined to answer.

Q. Because you are under duress are you unwilling to tell the truth?

Witness. I am never unwilling to tell the truth.

Q. Then why do you not answer?

The witness. When the contempt is removed I will answer, but not till then.

Q. You were asked just now whether you threw your votes for reasons which were founded on evidence satisfactory to yourself. Will you answer? A. That embraces the whole question, and I therefore decline.

Q. Will you answer? A. I tell you I decline.

Q. Are you not willing to testify whether your board threw out 10,000 and odd votes honestly or dishonestly? A. I am willing when relieved from contempt of the House.

Q. Are you willing to do so now? A. I cannot answer the question until released from such contempt.

Q. Are you now willing to answer the question whether in throwing out 10,000 and odd votes your board acted honestly or dishonestly? A. We acted in conformity with law.

Q. In throwing out votes? A. We threw them out for fraud, intimidation, and violence at the polls.

Q. Were any throw out because of irregularities? A. I think Grant parish was excluded. Q. Any except that? A. I think not.

Q. Was there a single objection to the votes on the ground that they were not actually cast? A. None.

Q. Then they must have been thrown out on the ground of intimidation? A. Men were forced to vote contrary to their wishes.

Q. Had you any witnesses before your board to prove that any particular voters were induced to vote contrary to their wishes? A. It was impossible to have oral testimony. The board adopted a rule that testimony should be taken by both parties.

Q. Did the voters themselves testify that they voted under compulsion? Was such evidence furnished to you? A. I think so.

Q. Will you say that proof was presented to you that a hundred different voters had voted under compulsion contrary to their judgment? A. I do not know how many. I think there was evidence of the fact. There may be 100 or 500 or more who said they were forced to vote contrary to their wishes.

In further examination witness said no votes were rejected except in consequence of intimidation, and among other things Mr. Field called the attention of the witness to the fact that it appeared that in the parish of Concordia, Josephs, one of the republican electors, received 1,950 votes, while in the certificates of the returning board he was credited with 2,538 votes. Witness replied it was in evidence that a troop of horsemen seized the ballot-box from the commissioners of election, who made up the returns from their count and sent them in.

Mr. Field asked the witness whether he did not say before the Morrison committee that this happened in Madison.

The witness replied yes, and something of the kind in Concordia also.

Mr. Field called the attention of witness to the fact that while the board, by throwing out 10,000 votes cast for Tilden, gave the electoral vote for Hayes, the witness omitted to account for their act of thus giving the latter three or four thousand majority.

In response to questions by Mr. Lawrence witness said the board gave to the Hayes ticket only such votes as it was entitled to receive, that they took no votes from the democrats contrary to law. The committee adjourned till to-morrow.

Yesterday morning as the deputy sergeant-at-arms of the House was taking Wells from the bastille to the committee, he searched him and

found on his person two loaded pistols and a dagger. These were taken from him, but he was allowed to take into the committee room a cane, which is said to be rifled. Wells is reported as saying last night that he would as soon kill David Dudley Field as not.

As Wells was going down the stairs after his examination, he said to the deputy sergeant-at-arms, in whose custody he was, "Field is a rough old cuss, but he shant insult me. If I get a chance I will whale him like hell."

By direction of Speaker Randall the sergeant-at-arms of the House last night removed Wells and Anderson from the room in the city where they have been confined, to the room of the committee on education and labor. Anderson said he was perfectly comfortable and did not care to change his quarters.

Revenue Detectives.

In committee of the whole, of the House of Representatives, on Saturday last, when the general appropriation bill was under discussion, the Clerk read as follows:—

For detecting and bringing to trial and punishment persons guilty of violating the internal revenue laws, or committing in such crime, including payments for information and detection, \$60,000.

Mr. Cabell.—I move in line 660 to strike out "60,000" and insert "40,000;" as it will read "40,000."

I take it for granted this system has arrived at that degree of perfection the appropriation for that duty can be lessened, and I hope it will be the pleasure of the House to adopt my amendment.

Mr. Holman.—I do not think the Committee on Appropriations will have any objection to the amendment of the gentleman from Virginia. The appropriation here before made was \$100,000; but there is great force in the suggestion that year after year, under our internal revenue system in time of peace, matters are becoming more systematized, and there would not seem to be the same necessity as in former years for large appropriations.

Mr. Harrison.—I rise to oppose that amendment. I think gentlemen are not aware of one difficulty the country will have to encounter for the next few years. We are commencing to coin silver, and machinery is now more extensively engaged in striking off silver coin than it has been for years in striking off greenbacks.

Mr. Cabell.—I would suggest to the gentleman that this appropriation relates to the internal revenue, and has no connection whatever with the matter he is now discussing.

Mr. Harrison.—I thought this referred to the regular detective system.

Mr. Clymer.—I suggest to the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. Cabell] to name in his amendment \$50,000.

Mr. Cabell.—I accept that suggestion, and modify my amendment accordingly.

Mr. Hale.—I hope that this amendment will not be insisted upon. If it should be, it is a matter of so much importance to the department that I think we ought to have a full vote upon it. The appropriation now in the bill is lower than the former appropriation; and while what has been said about simplifying details may be true, it is an actual fact that there has been more trouble in the collection of internal revenue within the last few months, and more need for this force detecting frauds, than at any time during the last three or four years.

If any change should be made in this appropriation of \$60,000, it ought to be increased rather than decreased. I will say to the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations that I do not think we should be doing justice to the department by assenting on the part of the committee to this amendment. The department would be glad to have more than the sum named in the bill and believes that it requires more. I think the appropriation had better be left as it is, at \$60,000.

Mr. Cabell.—I would be perfectly willing to agree to that if I did not think that, in view of the perfection to which the system ought to be brought by this time \$50,000, as suggested by the gentleman from Pennsylvania, [Mr. Clymer], should be sufficient. An appropriation of \$60,000 was made last year; and from all that I can ascertain that has been entirely sufficient. I am to be presumed that the department is going on perfecting this system month by month and year by year; and if \$60,000 were sufficient last year, \$60,000 should certainly be enough for the present year. The system in any aspect is a bad one, and if we could do without it, ought not to be continued. I would not undertake to hamper the Government in its operations now, though if we could get rid of such a system, it would be very much better. I know that this detective system has aided in some degree in the detection of crime, but at the same time it is often provocative of crime. The gentleman must see that the system has in many cases operated badly. The disclosures which have been made from time to time before committees of Congress have shown that the men occupying these positions as detectives are frequently not such persons as should be sent out by the Government, and do many other things besides the duties assigned them by their official superiors.

Mr. Hale.—I agree fully with the gentleman that any detective system is likely to be abused; and I do not doubt that there have been abuses in the department. The detective system in the collection of customs duties is a system which at times runs pretty rack, involving exactions and espionage upon citizens which to my mind are very offensive. I have no doubt that in the collection of the revenue in that large portion of the country lying south of us such things have come about. But you may depend upon it Mr. Chairman, that so long as we collect a large portion of our revenue through this Internal Revenue Bureau, and so long as there is temptation for fraud in the manufacture of liquors and tobacco, we must have a large and efficient detective force. The remedy for what the gentleman speaks of is not so much with us in cutting down appropriations as with the department in enforcing a good service, and securing as its agents men of character, capacity, shrewdness, and nerve, who will attend to the legitimate duties of their offices. That is not a thing which we can regulate. Thirty million dollars or forty million dollars cannot be collected as the internal revenue tax upon liquors of one kind and another without a large and efficient force of this kind. The department is fully satisfied that this appropriation of \$60,000, instead of being too much, is not sufficient; and taking off \$10,000 will cripple the operation of the department. We are all interested in having the revenue system properly enforced.

Mr. Cabell.—I would remind the gentleman from Maine that I have consented to a modification of my amendment to the extent of \$10,000, so that the appropriation shall be \$50,000 instead of \$60,000.

Mr. Hale.—Still I say that if this reduction of \$10,000 be made it will seriously cripple the department. I have no doubt the department would prefer more; and it may be that an attempt will be made in the other branch of Congress to increase the appropriation. I am in favor of sticking to this appropriation of \$60,000, and if anything more should be added in the Senate, doing as we did last year—insisting on the House figures. I think the gentleman will be better satisfied in the end if, instead of changing this appropriation which the committee has agreed upon, we let it go at \$60,000, with the understanding that if it should be put up elsewhere we shall hold the department to \$60,000.

Mr. Cabell.—I think \$50,000 is amply sufficient. I ask a vote on my amendment.

The question being taken on the amendment of Mr. Cabell, it was not agreed to.

Mr. Cabell.—I shall ask for a vote in the House.

Mr. Foster.—You cannot get it.

Mr. Cabell.—I will endeavor to get it, at any rate.

In the House, subsequently, the amendment of Mr. Cabell was adopted.

CITY COUNCIL.

A meeting of the City Council was held last night.

BOARD OF ALDERMEN.

This Board met at 7:50 o'clock.

A communication from the Mayor being read, Mr. Smoot called attention to the fact that the communication was addressed merely to the President of this Board, and not to the City Council, and that the other Board had had a similar communication on the table at the last meeting.

The Clerk suggested that a similar communication had probably been sent to the other Board.

Mr. Smoot said that in that view of the case the communication was all right.

Mr. Armstrong defended the action of the Mayor in so addressing a communication, and thought the action of the Common Council was dictated by prejudice and spite, and was an act of discourtesy to this Board, and had acted on and sent in the communication.

Mr. Smoot only objected to the address, in case it was to go to the other Board.

Mr. Janney concurred with Mr. Armstrong, that the action of the Common Council was an unnecessary act of discourtesy to the Mayor.

The matter was then dropped.

Corporation Attorney Stuart, by request, made a statement of what was asked of Council in regard to the supersedeas bond in the case of O. Fairfax vs. the City Council. He presented the draft of a bill, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Dowham called up the A. & W. railroad bill, and offered an amendment giving the right of way from the city line to King street.

Mr. Smoot hoped that the bill would not be passed to-night, as no notice of its introduction had been given, and one member was absent who would like to vote on the bill.

Mr. Dowham said he only wanted the amendment passed upon, and would not press the passage of the bill.

Mr. Strauss offered an amendment similar to the one previously offered in the Common Council requiring the payment of \$200 per year until a brick depot was built. This amendment was adopted.

Mr. Dowham's amendment was also adopted.

Mr. O'Neal asked leave to change his vote on Mr. Strauss' amendment from affirmative to negative, upon which request a debate arose concerning the whole railroad question, which was ended by Mr. O'Neal withdrawing his request.

A motion to adjourn was then put and carried, and the members were about to leave when a communication came in from the Common Council inviting the Board into joint convention.

The Board was again called to order and the request complied with.

Upon the return of the Board to their chamber, on motion of Mr. Smoot, they adjourned to meet again at 2:30 o'clock to-day, to attend the funeral of H. L. Simpson, esq., a former President of the Board.